

A.P. UNITED STATES HISTORY

#4 DISCUSS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ELECTION OF ANDREW JACKSON TO THE PRESIDENCY IN 1828.

By the time of Jackson, the United States political scene was evolving into a true two party system. Their roots include the early parties of Hamilton (Federalists) and Jefferson (Jeffersonian Republicans).

The issues were –powers the federal gov't should have.

- states rights
- economic policies (Hamilton's fiscal policies)
- slavery
- land use
- foreign policy

With the end of the War of 1812 and the approach of the so-called "Era of Good Feelings", the Federalist Party began to flounder failing to get into step with the nations westward march and the democratic trends associated with it. While the Federalist Party report card receives high marks for its accomplishments in seeing the nation through its infancy it became a dinosaur in a sense and was assimilated into the larger picture. Tales of possible treason at Hartford didn't help.

Jackson's following after the ill-fated election of 1824 and the so-called "Corrupt Bargain" splintered the remaining Democrat-Republican Party to form the Democratic Party. The followers of President John Quincy Adams renamed themselves the National Republicans.

Jackson's Democratic Party portrayed the Republicans to be the party of;

- eastern wealth
- a landed aristocracy which controlled the gov't
- having lost sight of the principles of Thomas Jefferson.

The Democrats portrayed themselves as; "my fight is your fight"

- party of the "Common Man".
- small farmer & city worker over aristocrats.
- more involvement in gov't by the people. (spoils system)
- wanting to eliminate federal intrusion in peoples lives.
- party wanting a lower tariff.
- the party seeking to restore the principles of Jefferson.
- western individualism.
- Jackson the peoples champion, hero of New Orleans.

DURING JACKSON'S PRESIDENCY

The two party system was re-established

Debate on critical issues was reopened.

The political system appeared to be more democratized.
was it really? National Conventions over King Caucus?

Social reform movements-concern for human welfare.

Womens rights, temperance movement, abolition,
prison reform, care of the mentally ill, public education.

Growth of the trade unions- Workingmens Parties

* remake of the Presidency-direct representative of the people
(use of the veto) from caretaker precedent.

Social Communitites-Oneida Movement, Nashoba etc.

Other significant events that took place during the Jackson Presidency.

- Universal manhood suffrage.
- National Nominating Conventions
- End of "King Caucus".
- Indian Removal
- Spoils System – Jackson, "rotation good for democracy". Prevents a permanent class of office holders.
- Killing of the National Bank (bastion of the aristocracy)
- Remake of the Presidency.
- Designs on the West, (Manifest Destiny)

The course of American politics was indeed changed with the Election of Andrew Jackson.

Point to Ponder: Would anything have been different had Jackson the man not been on the scene?